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Prepared for the
1996 International Mechanical Engineering Congress and Exhibit
sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers
Atlanta, Georgia, November 17-22, 1996



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

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ABSTRACT

The development of an effective design strategy for surface-mounted vortex generator arrays in a subsonic diffuser is described in this report. This strategy uses the strengths of both computational and experimental analyses to determine beneficial vortex generator locations and sizes. A parabolized Navier-Stokes solver, RNS3D, was used to establish proper placement of the vortex generators for reduction in circumferential total pressure distortion. Experimental measurements were used to determine proper vortex generator sizing to minimize total pressure recovery losses associated with vortex generator device drag. The best result achieved a 59% reduction in the distortion index DC60, with a 0.3% reduction in total pressure recovery.

NOMENCLATURE

$AATPR$	=	area-averaged total pressure recovery
c	=	vortex generator chordlength
d_o	=	centerbody or hub diameter (10.2 cms)
D	=	cowl diameter or duct width (25.4 cms)
$DC60$	=	circumferential distortion descriptor
h	=	vortex generator height
p_t	=	total pressure
q	=	dynamic pressure
r	=	crossplane radial coordinate
R	=	cowl radius (12.7 cms)
s	=	vortex generator lateral spacing
$60DRSD$	=	sixty degree ring sector distortion
x, y, z	=	Cartesian coordinate system
α	=	vortex generator angle-of-attack
δ	=	boundary layer thickness
θ	=	crossplane circumferential coordinate
ρ	=	fluid density

Subscripts

min	=	minimum value
ref	=	reference conditions at $s/D = -0.5$

INTRODUCTION

Inlet and Diffuser Overview

The time constraints of an ever-shrinking world are the fundamental driving forces behind recent efforts to expand supersonic cruise flight capability for passenger aircraft. In the United States this effort is being conducted through a joint partnership of aerospace industry and NASA in the High Speed Research (HSR) program. Current examples of supersonic cruise aircraft, the Russian Tu-144 and the Anglo-French Concorde, are products of extensive research efforts culminating nearly 30 years ago. The challenge today, for aerospace engineers participating in the HSR program, is to develop technology for a supersonic flight system that is reliable, efficient, and environmentally acceptable in such a manner that the focus of this effort, a High Speed Civil Transport (or "HSCT"), will be a frequently-flown and profitable aircraft in a way that the current examples are not.

To this end, one of the efforts that aeropropulsion engineers are focusing on is the design of the engine inlet. Both axisymmetric and 2-dimensional types are being considered. The 2-D candidate is referred to as a "bifurcated" inlet because it splits the captured massflow for one engine and initially divides it into two streams. The advantage of such an arrangement over a 2-D single-stream inlet (both the Tu-144 and the Concorde are single-stream types) is one of potential length (and thereby weight) reduction. A bifurcated design can be as much as 50% shorter than a single-stream inlet designed for the same captured massflow (Wasserbauer, 1993). Figure 1a illustrates the essential elements of the bifurcated inlet using a mixed-compression example tested at NASA-Lewis (Wasserbauer, 1993). A combination of oblique

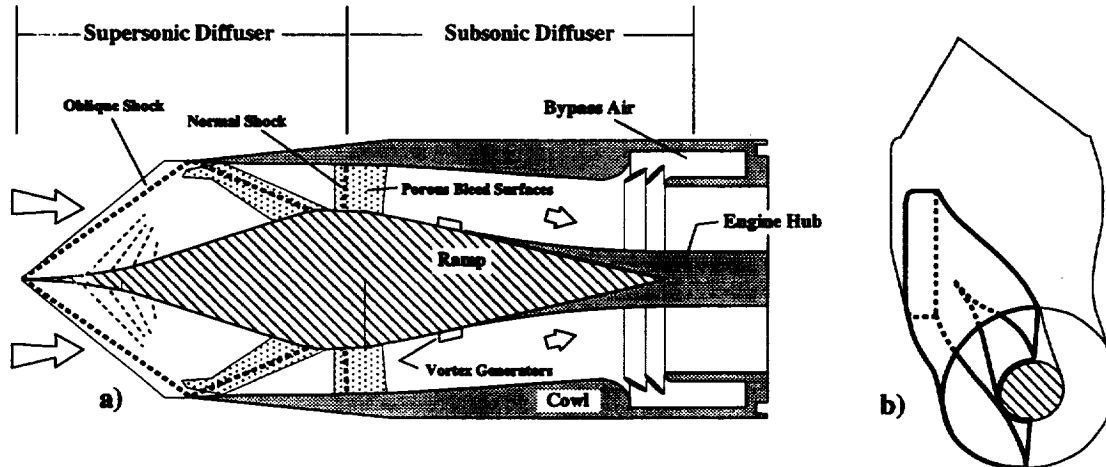


Figure 1 The bifurcated supersonic inlet.

shocks and internal compression comprise the upstream supersonic diffuser. This region of the inlet terminates in a normal shock nominally located at the throat or upstream end of the subsonic diffuser. An elaborate bleed system is used to control the boundary layer and shock impingement locations in the supersonic diffuser. Vortex generators and a bypass bleed system are used to control boundary layer development in the subsonic diffuser. Figure 1b is an oblique view of the inlet (looking upstream) as it would appear in a flight configuration mounted under a wing surface. One half of the bifurcated subsonic diffuser is highlighted with heavy lines in Figure 1b. This type of diffuser is referred to as a "transitioning S-diffuser" due to the cross-sectional area change (from rectangular to semiannular) and a slight S-shaped centerline curvature.

Improving Subsonic Diffuser Performance with Vortex Generators

Like many other problems in engineering, diffuser design is a balance of conflicting requirements. In general terms, subsonic diffusers are designed to supply an airstream to an engine. The properties of this airstream are constrained by the requirements of the engine compressor. Some degree of fluid deceleration, pressure rise, and flow uniformity at the compressor are typically called for. Deceleration of the fluid to the desired velocity requires an increase in cross-sectional area. If this process is to occur in an efficient manner, the internal boundary layers must not thicken excessively or detach from the flow surfaces. Working against this are the length and cross-sectional geometry requirements of the inlet and connected propulsion system. Shortening the diffuser increases the adverse axial pressure gradient and the possibility of global boundary layer separation; transitions in cross-sectional shape and duct centerline curvature promote the development of secondary flows. Once established, secondary flows have a tendency to accumulate boundary layer fluid at discrete locations thereby increasing the possibility of localized flow separation and attendant flow non-uniformity.

Vortex generators are devices used to counter these problems. The concept of using vortex generators to control boundary layer flows was first developed as a means of enhancing diffuser per-

formance. The earliest studies were conducted by Taylor (1948), Grose and Taylor (1954), and Percy (1961). At the most fundamental level, a vortex generator is simply a protrusion into a fluid stream that sheds a vortex (or vortices) into the downstream boundary layer. The basis of boundary layer control lies in the convective nature of this shed vortex. The vortex *mixes* the high energy fluid of the freestream (or duct core flow) with the slower moving fluid of the boundary layer. The boundary layer fluid is effectively re-energized and is now more resistant to separation. This mixing mechanism of vortex generator effectiveness is long established. A good description is found in the report of Schubauer and Spangenberg (1960). In addition to promoting fluid mixing, vortex generators may also be used to counter the detrimental effects of secondary flows. This mode of vortex generator effectiveness was recently explored using a diffusing S-duct geometry in studies by Anderson and Levy (1991), Reichert and Wendt (1996), and Anderson and Gibb (1996).

Diffuser performance is quantified in terms of recovery and distortion descriptors. *Total pressure recovery* is a measure of the efficiency of the diffusion process, while *total pressure distortion* is a measure of the flow uniformity supplied to the engine. In optimizing diffuser performance through a suitable application of vortex generators we must first determine the balance required between recovery and distortion of our inlet and engine system. Since each vortex generator used represents an energy loss (through device drag, a function of vortex generator frontal area) optimization requires us to use the minimum number (or minimum total frontal area) of vortex generators needed to obtain the required recovery and distortion goals. *How one achieves this number and pattern is the essence of the design problem.* The large number of geometric parameters in the vortex generator design and vortex generator arrangement (or "array") make this problem difficult. Consider Figure 2, which illustrates an array of common vane-type vortex generators mounted on an internal flow surface. The geometric elements of the individual vortex generators (chord, c ; span, h ; angle-of-attack, α ; etc) relate directly to the initial strength and concentration of the shed vortices and so must be chosen carefully. Also of critical importance is the manner in which the vortices interact downstream. This is partially determined by the

axial location of the array, z_a , the initial spacing between vortex generators, s , and the rotational orientation of the array, i.e. whether vortices are shed counter-rotating or co-rotating with respect to immediate neighbors. Limited experimental parametric studies have been conducted to develop effective strategies for vortex generator use in a diffusing S-duct (Reichert and Wendt, 1993, 1996) and a rectangular-to-semiannular diffuser similar to the one illustrated in Figure 1b (Brown *et al.*, 1968). Of greater potential utility is the application of computational fluid dynamics to the optimization problem. In particular, fast diffuser design codes based on solutions to the parabolized (or "reduced") Navier-Stokes equations have the ability to run through large parametric ranges in a time and cost effective manner.

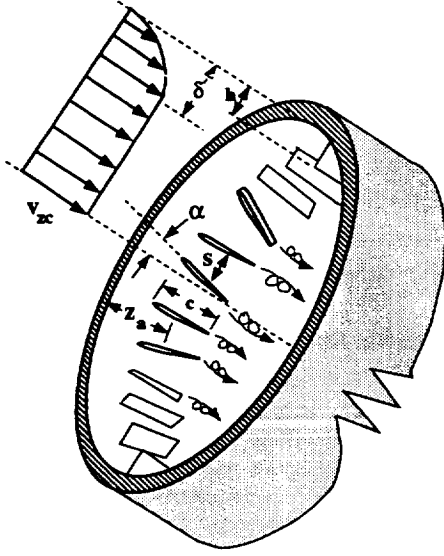


Figure 2 The many parameters of vortex generator design include elements of the array geometry.

The objective of this study is to develop a synergistic computational-experimental approach to vortex generator use for a transitioning S-diffuser. The code used is a parabolized code known as RNS3D. It is a modification of the PEP SIG code based on the stream function-vorticity formulation of the reduced Navier-Stokes equations and was originally developed for internal flows on nonorthogonal grids by Levy, Briley, and McDonald (1983). Experimental measurements are conducted on a corresponding test model. These measurements are meant to "calibrate" both the vortex generator model used in the code, and the code distortion results, as well as track the losses incurred through vortex generator use. Optimum diffuser performance results are not necessarily achieved by the synthesis described herein, nor can we show that this effort will achieve optimization; but the results obtained demonstrate large improvements and serve as a first step in addressing this difficult design problem.

TOOLS AND PROCEDURES

Diffuser Definition

The rectangular-to-semiannular diffuser used in this study (des-

ignated "td118") is one of a series of geometrically similar ducts designed by Anderson and Kapoor (1994). If the outer diameter of the annular exit cross-section is D then the overall axial length-to-diameter ratio is $L/D = 2.0$. The exit-to-inlet cross-sectional area ratio is $A_e/A_i = 1.51$. Figure 3 provides three views of the td118 diffuser and assists in the following mathematical description.

The diffuser maintains a width of $D = 25.4$ cms over its axial length $L = 50.8$ cms. When viewed in profile we note that the line that defines the top center of the duct is straight (no curvature in the x_1, x_3 plane). The floor of the diffuser is of width D and has no curvature in the x_2, x_3 plane. The coordinates for the centerline of the diffuser floor are (Foster *et al.*, 1995):

$$\frac{x_{i,cl}}{D} = \sum_{j=0}^5 c_{i,j} \left(\frac{x_1}{D} \right)^j, \quad i = 1, 2, 3. \quad (1)$$

The coordinate system definitions are provided in Figure 3. The duct cross-section is defined by a super-ellipse in a plane perpendicular to the centerline of Eq. (1). The triple (x_4, x_5, x_6) represents the orthogonal coordinate system (see Figure 3). The equation for the duct cross-section is:

$$\left(\frac{2x_5/D}{B_4} \right)^{B_6} + \left(\frac{2x_6/D}{B_5} \right)^{B_6} = 1, \quad (2)$$

and the equation for the centerbody cross-sectional shape is:

$$\left(\frac{2x_5/D}{B_7} \right)^{B_8} + \left(\frac{2x_6/D}{B_8} \right)^{B_8} = 1, \quad (3)$$

where the B_i are defined by equations having the form of Eq. (1):

$$B_i = \sum_{j=0}^5 c_{i,j} \left(\frac{x_1}{D} \right)^j, \quad i = 4, \dots, 8. \quad (4)$$

The constants $c_{i,j}$ from Eqs. (1) and (4) are tabulated in the report of Foster *et al.* (1995).

Experimental Facility

Experimental measurements of the td118 diffuser flowfield were made at NASA Lewis Research Center using the Internal Fluid Mechanics Facility (IFMF). This facility was designed to support the research of a variety of internal flow configurations and is described in detail by Porro *et al.* (1991). The facility in the vicinity of the test section, as it is assembled for this test, is illustrated in Figure 4. Laboratory air at atmospheric conditions flows into a large settling plenum. Flow conditioning elements (honeycombs and screens) are located in this plenum and are used to reduce the turbulence levels of the incoming airstream. A pair of contraction ducts accelerates the flow supplied to a roughly constant flow area spool section having a cross-section with the same dimensions as the diffuser throat. Static pressure instrumentation in the spool section provides the reference throat Mach number for the diffuser model located immediately downstream. Crossplane measurements of diffuser exit plane total pressure are acquired by two translating rakes of five-hole probes (3 tips per rake). These rakes are similar to the rake described in the report of Wendt and Reichert (1995). The calibration scheme and uncertainty of the

Figure 9 compares the corresponding radial profiles of 60DRSD. In general terms, the code overpredicts the cowl boundary layer thickness and somewhat underpredicts the ramp boundary layer thickness. This is evident in the distinct “two-lump” pattern produced by the calculation; the first (LHS) lump is produced primarily by the ramp boundary layer, and the second (RHS) lump originates from the cowl boundary layer.

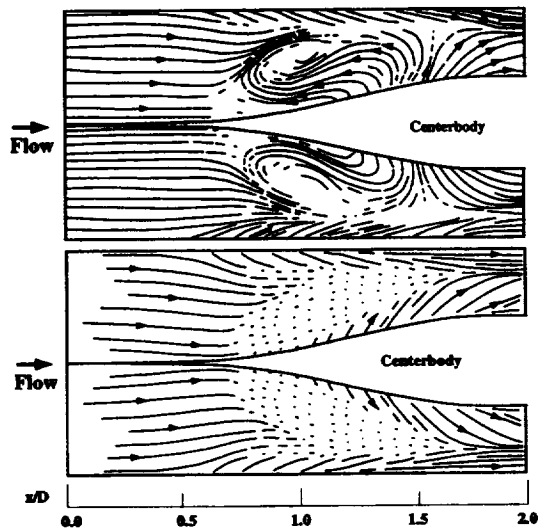


Figure 7 Baseline ramp surface streamlines. Plastic duct is top illustration, aluminum duct is bottom.

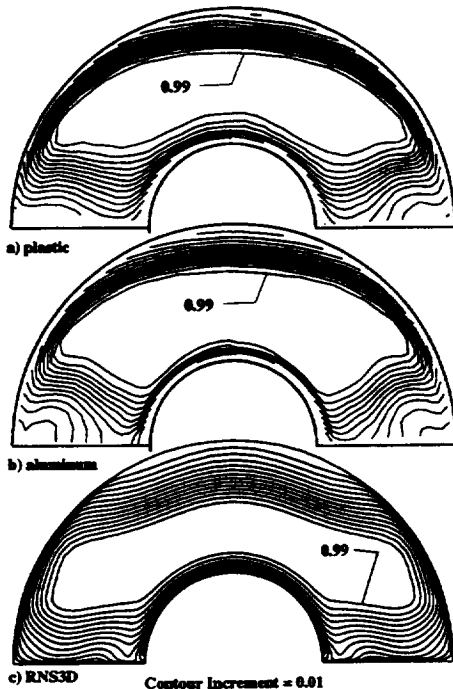


Figure 8 Contour plots of total pressure ratio (p_t/p_{tref}) in the exit plane of the diffuser.

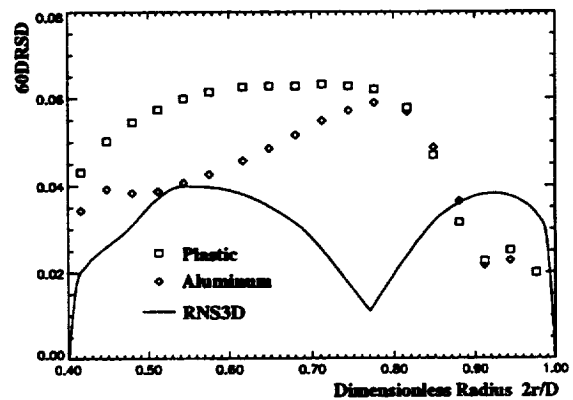


Figure 9 Profiles of circumferential distortion for the baseline diffuser.

Vortex Generator Design Sequence

The overall objective of vortex generator use in the td118 diffuser is to reduce the circumferential distortion of the duct while minimizing the drag-related recovery losses. This process was carried out in two parts:

1. The baseline total pressure contours (Figures 8a-c) were carefully studied. We then asked ourselves the question: “What changes in these patterns would result in lower values of circumferential distortion?” Several concepts were considered. These concepts were implemented using the considerable convective influence of the medium or large vortex generators. Five trials were conducted in the plastic diffuser. In addition to overall screening, the results were also used to calibrate the vortex generator model in the code and to establish a means of performance comparison between computational and experimental results. This means of comparison is the radial profile of 60DRSD. Of the 5 trials conducted, the one producing the minimum amount of DC60 was chosen for further refinement.
2. In the second part, our aim was to minimize the recovery losses. Using the pattern having the minimum value of DC60 established above, each large vortex generator was replaced with a co-rotating pair or triple composed of small vortex generators. Proper placement of these vortex generators was established using the code. Many computational trials were conducted, and the two refined patterns which produced the most favorable profiles of 60DRSD were tested experimentally in the aluminum diffuser.

The vortex generator array was designed for (and mounted at) a single axial location: $x_1/D = 0.575$ downstream of the diffuser throat (see Figure 3).

Figures 10a-e illustrate the exit plane total pressure results of the five pattern trials conducted experimentally in the plastic diffuser. The right-hand side of each contour plot illustrates the experimental results and the left-hand side illustrates the computational mimic. Experimental values of AATPR and DC60 are listed with each corresponding contour plot.

In the geometry of the td118 duct, the diffusion is provided by the ramp floor “turning down” away from the stream. Thus

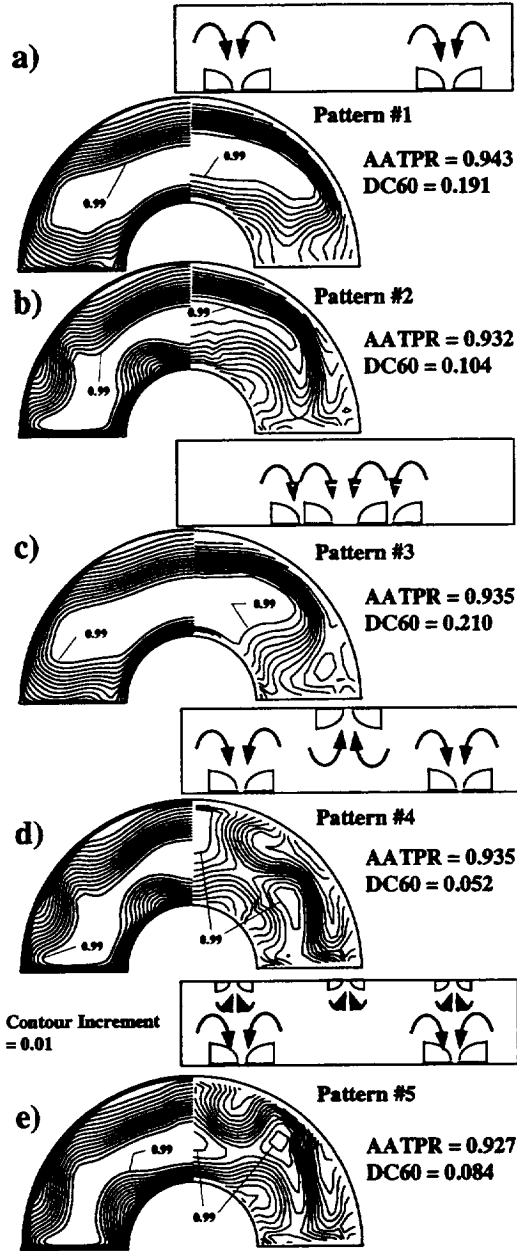


Figure 10 Contours of total pressure ratio for the trial vortex generator patterns in the plastic diffuser.

our first flow control concept was to use two pairs of downflow vortices on the ramp to assist in turning the stream to follow the surface contour of the duct. The term “downflow vortex pair” refers to the convective action of the shed vortices. The fluid between the vortices in the pair is convected towards the wall (the “downward” direction). Each downflow pair was centered on the two streamwise channels created by the diffuser cowl and centerbody surfaces. Pattern 1 (Figure 10a) used medium-sized vortex generators, and Pattern 2 (Figure 10b) used large vortex generators. Each pattern demonstrates an effective thinning of the ramp boundary layer.

The second flow control concept tested is related to the perceived beneficial action of the centerbody on the diffuser flow field. The centerbody is designed to prevent the duct from overdiffusing and the ramp boundary layer from separating. Vortex generator Pattern 3 (Figure 10c) uses two co-rotating pairs of large vortex generators to produce a region of strong downflow on the ramp centerline for an “enhanced centerbody” effect. The resulting pattern did not significantly reduce the circumferential distortion.

The third flow control concept is similar to the first, but also includes a downflow vortex pair (or pairs) on the cowl surface. Pattern 4 (Figure 10d) has 3 pairs of large vortex generators (2 on the ramp surface as in Pattern 2, and 1 on the cowl centerline). Pattern 5 (Figure 10e) has 5 pairs of vortex generators (2 large pairs on the ramp surface as in Pattern 2, and 3 medium-sized pairs equally spaced on the cowl surface). The downflow vortex pairs placed on the cowl surface were found to effectively thin the cowl boundary layer.

Figure 11 compares the 5 plastic duct experimental profiles of 60DRSD to the computational profiles. As in the baseline case, the experimental and computational profiles do not have corresponding shapes; however, the trend in distortion reduction (from Pattern 1 to Pattern 5) is reproduced in the computational results.

Of the 5 trials conducted above, Pattern 4 represented the best strategy for minimizing circumferential distortion. Comparison of Pattern 4 to the plastic diffuser baseline shows an 82% reduction in DC60 paid for with a 1% loss in AATPR. A large penalty in drag-related losses was tied to the use of large vortex generators in Pattern 4. To gain back a portion of the total pressure recovery

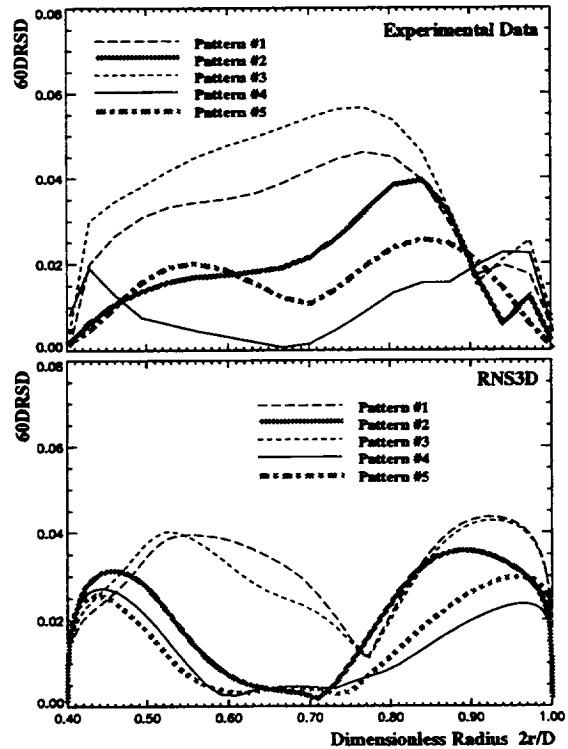


Figure 11 A comparison of 60DRSD profiles of the 5 trial vortex generator arrays.

performance lost, we next replaced each large vortex generator in Pattern 4 with a set of small co-rotating vortex generators. Double and triple sets were considered. The proper spacing between the vortex generators was determined by running various trials with RNS3D, and comparing the resulting profiles of 60DRSD. The spacing ratio of Pattern 4 was $s/D = 0.175$, where s is the distance between adjacent trailing edge tips of the tapered fin vortex generators. The optimum spacing for small double sets was determined to be $s/D = 0.042$, and for small triple sets $s/D = 0.031$. The resulting vortex generator arrays, Patterns 6 and 7, were tested in the aluminum diffuser. The results are illustrated in Figures 12a-b. Comparison of Pattern 6 to the aluminum diffuser baseline indicates a 59% reduction in DC60 paid for with a 0.3% loss in AATPR. Figure 13 plots the corresponding experimental and computational profiles of 60DRSD for the results obtained using vortex generators in the aluminum diffuser.

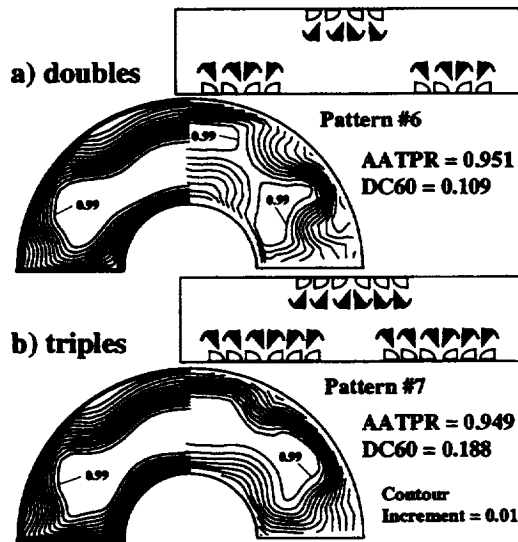


Figure 12 Exit plane contours of total pressure ratio for vortex generator pattern refinement in the aluminum diffuser.

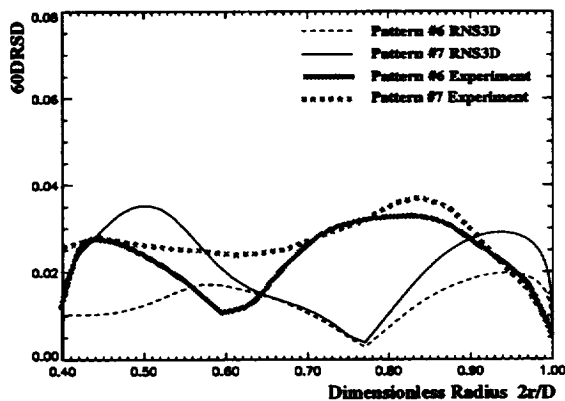


Figure 13 A comparison of experimental and computational profiles of 60DRSD for vortex generator pattern refinement in the aluminum diffuser.

A comparison of the baseline flow fields in Figure 8 to the vortex generator-influenced flow fields of Figures 10 and 12 reveals the considerable convective power of the vortices shed from the tapered-fins. It is important to emphasize that the improvements in distortion behavior represented by these figures were achieved with only the simplest understanding and representation of the convective nature of the shed vortices. The maximum benefit possible, i.e. *optimization*, will likely be achieved only with a deeper understanding of internal flows. This applies equally to the flow problems generated unintentionally within the duct, and the flow induced by devices (such as vortex generators) used to counter them. The simple procedure and results described here should provide further incentive for such efforts.

SUMMARY

Computational and experimental methods were used synergistically to develop a beneficial vortex generator design for the td118 transitioning S-shaped diffuser. The most beneficial configurations are those which minimize both total pressure distortion and losses. The RNS3D code was used to screen several vortex generator patterns to determine the vortex generator placement which produced minimum distortion in the diffuser exit plane flow field. Experimental measurements were taken to find the vortex generator size required to minimize total pressure losses. The best result achieved a 59% reduction in DC60 distortion with only a 0.3% reduction in total pressure recovery.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to acknowledge Bernie Anderson and Kamlesh Kapoor for their efforts in producing the baseline grid and flow solution. Charlie Towne provided valuable assistance in debugging the vortex generator subroutines in the RNS3D code. Bruce Reichert and Jeff Foster assisted in the design, construction, and operation of the test facilities. Finally, a special thank you to Mr. B. Darby and Ms. M. Binchy for their helpful insights.

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE November 1996	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Technical Memorandum		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE A Computational-Experimental Development of Vortex Generator Use for a Transitioning S-Diffuser		5. FUNDING NUMBERS WU-523-36-13		
6. AUTHOR(S) Bruce J. Wendt and Julianne C. Dudek				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National Aeronautics and Space Administration Lewis Research Center Cleveland, Ohio 44135-3191		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER E-10511		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National Aeronautics and Space Administration Washington, DC 20546-0001		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER NASA TM-107357		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Prepared for the 1996 International Mechanical Engineering Congress and Exhibit sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Atlanta, Georgia, November 17-22, 1996. Bruce J. Wendt, Modern Technologies Corporation, 7530 Lucerne Drive, Islander No. 2, Suite 206, Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130 (work funded by NASA Contract NAS3-27333); Julianne C. Dudek, NASA Lewis Research Center. Responsible person, Julianne C. Dudek, organization code 5850, (216) 433-5906.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Unclassified - Unlimited Subject Categories 02 and 07 This publication is available from the NASA Center for AeroSpace Information, (301) 621-0390.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
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14. SUBJECT TERMS Vortex generators; Diffusers; Internal flows			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 11	
			16. PRICE CODE A03	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	